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**Wie is ek?:
A study
of Afrikaner identity
in New Zealand**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Social Anthropology

at Massey University, Albany, New Zealand.

**Kris Finlayson
2018**

Acknowledgements

Many people helped in creating this thesis and supporting me throughout its construction. Firstly, I would like to thank my family. My children, Noach, Naomi and Ezra, though you are too young to fully understand it yet, this is your heritage and I hope that you will remember it throughout your lives. Reuel, my wife, you have supported me throughout my many adventures into academia without ever raising an eyebrow; thank you for your support. Without you, I would never have known how wonderful Afrikaans culture is.

Thank you also to both of my postgraduate supervisors, Dr. Robyn Andrews and Dr. Graeme MacRae. Your positive feedback – and necessary critique – have been invaluable in guiding me to completion.

The Afrikaans community in New Zealand has been one of the most welcoming, warm and boisterous communities I have had the pleasure of being a part of. Specifically, I would like to acknowledge Charl, Janelle, Daniël, Simone, Erich, Louise, Edrich as well as Arnelle and Vernita in South Africa. You likely don't realise it but you have helped immensely in guiding my thoughts and reminding me of the importance of this research.

Thank you to the participants in my research. Without your input, narrative and hospitality, this thesis would obviously not exist. Thank you so much for sharing a part of yourselves with me.

Finally, I would like to thank my God who has given me life, sustained me and enabled me to reach this occasion.

Baie dankie aan almal.

Abstract

Afrikaners have had a tumultuous history since the Dutch arrived in what is now known as Cape Town. Using Barth's (1969) concept of ethnic boundary construction and maintenance, this research examines the state of Afrikaans identity in a New Zealand diasporic context. The research employs a novel approach to interview data collection, using a modified version of Wengraf's (2017) biographic narrative interview method in conjunction with a dual-participant interview method. This approach allows a multiplicity of subjective viewpoints, exploring Afrikaner perceptions, their experiences, how they see themselves fitting into their Afrikaans community and how this community fits into New Zealand society.

The findings from this study show that Afrikaners refer to a representation akin to a Barthian model of Afrikaner. Through interviews, participants implied this presentation which was then constructed into an analytic model for the study. The model they indicated consists of four key characteristics: heritage, faith as a cultural value, language and a conservative worldview. Participants referred to themselves against this model in order to ascertain how 'typical' they are regarding shared community behaviour and perspectives.

The study then discusses this Afrikaner identity in a New Zealand socio-cultural context. It discovers that even though New Zealand and Afrikaner-South African societies are vastly different, New Zealand's socially liberal worldview allows an easy transition for today's comparatively diverse Afrikaners. This transitional process and ethnic boundary modification was found to impact Afrikaner identity in varying ways, particularly related to areas of personal security, new relationship formation and hospitality, manner of speech, and how they perceived what members of New Zealand society think about Afrikaners.

Keywords:

Afrikaans, Afrikaners, Anthropology, Barth, Bourdieu, Ethnic Boundary, Ethnic Identity, Ethnography, New Zealand, Migrants, South Africa.

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